

**Remarks**

Claims 1-23 are currently pending in this application with claims 2-15 and 23 standing withdrawn from consideration.

Applicant acknowledges the allowance of claims 17-21.

**Response to Claim Rejections**

**Claim 1**

Claim 1 is directed to a ring mechanism for a loose-leaf binder. The mechanism comprises:

a thin, elongate plate,

at least two ring members supported by the elongate plate for relative movement of the ring members between an open position in which the ring members are spaced apart and loose-leaf pages may be received on and removed from at least one of the ring members, and a closed position in which the ring members are engaged to form a ring which is configured to capture the loose-leaf pages on the ring while permitting movement of the pages along the ring,

a pair of elongate leaves disposed beneath the elongate plate and carried by the elongate plate, the leaves each mounting a respective one of the ring members and being pivotable relative to the elongate plate between said open and closed positions of the ring members,

the elongate plate having longitudinal ends, at least one of the longitudinal ends including first and second end portions located on one transverse side of the elongate plate, said first and second end portions being bent over to present a longitudinally facing surface which is blunt.

Claim 1 is unanticipated by and patentable over the prior art of record, including U.S. Patent No. 1,896,840 (Dawson) because Dawson fails to teach or suggest a ring mechanism

including 1) a pair of elongate leaves mounting a respective one of the ring members, and 2) an elongate plate having longitudinal ends wherein at least one of the longitudinal ends includes first and second end portions located on one transverse side of the elongate plate and being bent over to present a longitudinally facing surface which is blunt.

The reasons for the present invention are safety and economy. The thin longitudinal ends of the elongate plate, if unbent, can provide a cutting surface, which is undesirable. To resolve this problem without adding more parts (which increases both parts and manufacturing costs), applicant has uniquely bent over the ends of the elongate plate.

As shown in Fig. 1, Dawson discloses a ring mechanism 12 having a cover 13, rings 19, 21, and a lever 29. Flanges 15, 16 extend along the longitudinal side of the cover 13 and end walls 31 partially close each longitudinal end of the cover.

Dawson, however, does not disclose elongate leaves that mount the ring members as recited in claim 1. While the booster lever 25 pointed to by the Examiner in Dawson as corresponding to the claimed elongate leaves are used to move the ring members of Dawson between opened and closed positions, the ring members are not mounted on the booster lever. Instead, the ring members 19, 21 of Dawson are formed integrally with wires 18, 17, respectively, (see lines 41-45 of Dawson) and ring members 22, 23 are mounted to the wires 18, 17. See lines 45-47 of Dawson. As a result, Dawson fails to disclose a pair of elongate leaves mounting a respective one of the ring members as recited in amended claim 1.

Moreover, the Examiner has taken the position that the corner (i.e., where the longitudinally extending flange 15 contacts the laterally extending flange 31) corresponds to the claim 1 recitation of "first and second end portions".

However, claim 1 recites that the first and second end portions are bent over to present a longitudinally facing surface which is blunt. In Dawson, the corner is not blunt. Instead, the corner defines an edge. Accordingly, Dawson fails to disclose an elongate plate having longitudinal ends wherein at least one of the longitudinal ends includes first and second end portions located on one transverse side of the elongate plate and being bent over to present a longitudinally facing surface which is blunt as recited in claim 1.

For these reasons, claim 1 is submitted to be unanticipated by and patentable over Dawson.

Claims 16 and 22 depend directly from amended claim 1 and are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration of the claims as now presented is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any under payment or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 19-1345.

Respectfully submitted,

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